



West Lake Update

February 22, 2022

Regional Administrator Transition, Superfund Division Director Retires, OU-1 Update

On December 13, 2021, Meg McCollister was announced as the new EPA Region 7 administrator.

Ed Chu, who had been the acting regional administrator over the last year, has resumed his role as the deputy regional administrator.

Greetings from Meg McCollister

When President Biden appointed me to lead EPA Region 7, I welcomed the opportunity because working and engaging with communities is something that I am passionate about, and I know that the West Lake Landfill community is active, strong, and dedicated to working toward getting the site cleaned up.

As I come on board as the new regional administrator, I want to emphasize that our commitment to this site and community remains unchanged. The West Lake Landfill remains a top Region 7 Superfund priority. I am personally committed to overseeing continued progress toward implementing the cleanup. Personal engagement is also something that is very important for me, and I am looking forward to getting to know members of the Bridgeton community soon.



Farewell to Superfund Division Director, Mary Peterson

Mary Peterson, Director of Region 7's Superfund and Emergency Management Division, is retiring on February 26, 2022. Mary began her federal career in the Superfund program in 1990 as a Remedial Project Manager where she learned first-hand the value of community engagement in navigating a site through the Superfund process. She developed expertise in managing chlorinated solvent groundwater sites and implemented one

of the first response actions in the country to address vapor intrusion. The Bridgeton community knows Mary best through her role as the Superfund Director, which she began in 2015. Mary has overseen some significant accomplishments for the West Lake Landfill project including a response action to place non-combustible cover over areas where radiologically impacted material (RIM) was present near the surface, installation of a heat extraction system to prevent migration of heat from the subsurface smoldering event (SSE) into areas containing RIM, and signature of the 2018 Record of Decision Amendment. Throughout her tenure as Superfund Director, Mary has placed a high priority on frequent and transparent communication with the public, which has helped to build trust with the community and stakeholders. In retirement, Mary plans to spend time pursuing some fitness goals, traveling and RVing with her husband, volunteering at church or with charitable organizations, and indulging in some creative hobbies like music, writing, and gardening.



Operable Unit-1 Remedial Design Update

Investigation activities resumed in November 2021 at the West Lake Landfill Site to collect additional borings within OU-1 Area 1 and Area 2 to fill critical data gaps needed to design an excavation plan for the safe removal of radiologically impacted material, or RIM.

EPA approved Addendum 5 to the OU-1 Field Sampling Plan (FSP) on September 9, 2021, to address these data gaps. This addendum required the collection of 21 additional borings (seven borings in Area 1 and 14 borings in Area 2) to refine the excavation plan. The data from these borings are necessary to ensure that the Revised Excavation Plan will result in the safe removal of the RIM that the OU-1 Record of Decision Amendment requires. Also, this data will be used to help minimize excavation of landfill waste, which would increase the time required to finish the cleanup during Remedial

Action. One key objective of the design is to maximize removal of RIM while minimizing removal of landfill waste in order to minimize odors and complete the excavation work as quickly as possible.

EPA approved modifications to the OU-1 FSP on November 10, 2021, which require additional laboratory analysis and radiological scanning. The additional laboratory analysis will support the selection of one or more waste disposal facilities, the development of RIM loading procedures and selection of the type of shipping container. These are important design elements to ensure the excavation and transport of RIM is completed safely and without excessive delays during Remedial Action.

The additional radiological scanning provides a scientifically defensible process to combine the radiological screening collected before the OU-1 Design Investigation with newly collected data. These efforts help ensure the design of the excavation will meet the requirements in the OU-1 Record of Decision Amendment.

As the FSP work was completed toward the end of November, crews immediately began drilling additional borings within the Inactive Sanitary Landfill and the Construction and Demolition Landfill as proposed in FSP Addendum 4. These borings are necessary to determine the final extent of RIM in these areas to complete the OU-1 Design Investigation. EPA provided approval of the boring locations on December 9, 2021, while review of the plan was ongoing in order to avoid further schedule delays. EPA then approved FSP Addendum 4 with modifications on January 10, 2022. In addition to the initially proposed borings, FSP Addendum 4 also includes protocols to drill additional step-out or step-in borings until the Design Investigation is complete. All of the planned sampling for the Design Investigation has been completed and the field work has entered the final phase. Step-out borings are being drilled to find the outer boundary of RIM and solid waste. The need for additional step-out borings is dependent upon the results of the sampling which are available about one month after collection. EPA is working with the Respondents to ensure decisions regarding step-in and step-out borings are being expedited to complete this field work as quickly as possible. While it is difficult to predict the number of additional step-out borings that must be collected, EPA anticipates the field work will be complete this Spring.

Completion of the Design Investigation field work is a very important element of the OU-1 Remedial Design schedule, particularly the Revised Excavation Plan. The OU-1 Design Investigation was originally estimated to take approximately three months to complete. Because

additional areas of RIM were identified in the Inactive Sanitary Landfill and the Construction and Demolition Landfill, the duration of field work has now increased to approximately 17 months.

Meanwhile, work has progressed on other critical design elements including design of the cover system, excavation and loading procedures, disposal facility evaluations, and plans for monitoring to be conducted during the Remedial Action.

Completion of a detailed and technically sound Remedial Design will prevent delays during the excavation of RIM and construction of the final cover system and minimize the time that excavation areas will remain open which decreases time that RIM and landfill waste will be exposed.

We understand the public is ready to see construction begin, but our highest priority is to ensure the remedy is constructed in the safest and quickest manner possible. This requires additional time during the design phase.

Note: Plans referenced in this West Lake Update are available for you to review at www.epa.gov/superfund/westlakelandfill.

Community Inquiries

Ben Washburn

913-551-7364

Washburn.Ben@epa.gov

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Remedial Design Investigation boring locations as outlined in Addendum 4 and 5 of the Field Sampling Plan. (U.S. EPA graphic)